



# PESTICIDE ALERT

## Insecticide Chalk: Unsafe and Illegal

This Pesticide Alert is to advise school maintenance or other personnel that an illegal pesticide — insecticide chalk — has been marketed to schools under claims that it is a safe alternative to pesticides. Imported illegally from China and other sources, insecticide chalk is described as being effective at killing cockroaches and other pests when a chalk line is drawn across the floor or baseboards.

### Hazardous to Children

U.S. EPA is particularly concerned about insecticide chalk because children may mistake the insecticide for blackboard chalk.

Overexposure to some chemicals found in samples of insecticide chalk can provoke serious health effects, including vomiting, stomach pains, convulsions, tremors, and loss of consciousness. Serious allergic reactions are also possible. Several children have been hospitalized after *eating* insecticide chalk.



Dispose of any supplies of insecticide chalk safely — either return the product to the retailer where it was purchased, or contact a local hazardous waste facility to arrange for disposal.

### Choose Pesticides Carefully

Insecticide chalk has *never* been registered by EPA for use in the United States. You have no way of knowing how dangerous an unregistered pesticide is, because it is not subject to testing requirements or manufacturing controls that registration provides.

Only use pesticides that are registered with U.S. EPA and with your state pesticide regulatory agency, or products that have been exempted from registration.

Always read and follow label directions for safe use. The label provides important information you need to protect yourself and the children in your care.

## THIS PRODUCT IS UNSAFE AND ILLEGAL

Please help us locate the distribution points of these insecticide chalk products and stop them at their sources. The chalk is sold under several labels, including “Miraculous Insecticide Chalk” and “Chinese Chalk”. It has recently been advertised on the Internet and is sold at swap meets, flea markets, and grocery stores selling products imported from Asia. If you know where such products are being sold, please call the California Department of Pesticide Regulation at (916) 445-3920.

### Pest Control Alternatives

Several low-risk pesticides are available on the market to control cockroaches and other pests. Many schools are adopting Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Programs to reduce or eliminate use of hazardous pesticides. IPM creates an environment inhospitable to pests by keeping pests out (installing screens and sealing cracks in walls), by eliminating sources of food and water and breeding areas, and by careful use of chemical controls (pheromone traps, baits, or crack and crevice applications). For more information on IPM in Schools, contact the U.S. EPA Region 9 Pesticide Program at (415) 744-1087. **This fact sheet is also available online at [www.epa.gov/region09/toxic/pest/chalk](http://www.epa.gov/region09/toxic/pest/chalk).**